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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BARRAN 00206 212024Z
ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 CA-01 EB-08 FAA-00 DOTE-00
CAB-05 PA-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00
/047 W
----------014105 212031Z /63
O 211800Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL BARRANQUILLA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 520
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

UNCLAS BARRANQUILLA 0206

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC SNAR CO (BODNAR,ANDREW JACKSON)
SUBJECT: W/W: ANDREW JACKSON BODNAR

REF: (A) BARRANQUILLA 199 (B) BARRANQUILLA 204

1. ON JUNE 17, CONOFF VISITED LT. CARLOS MARTINEZ, OF COLOM-
BIAN NATIONAL POLICE,CARTAGENA,CONCERNING DISAPPEARANCE OF ANDREW
BODNAR AND AEROCOMANDER REGISTRATION N 7 KD BELIEVED TO HAVE
CRASHED NEAR CARTAGENA JUNE 2. CONOFF ASKED ABOUT NEWSPAPER
ARTICLES WHICH HAVE REPEATEDLY REFERRED TO THE POLICE HAVING
ARRIVED AT CLANDESTINE AIRSTRIP JUST AS A PLANE (WHICH CRASHED
JUNE 2) WAS TAKING OFF AND TO SHOOTING WHICH SUPPOSEDLY
OCCURRED AT THE TIME. MARTINEZ SAID STORIES ARE FABRICATION
OF JOURNALISTS AND POLICE HAVE NO IDEA WHERE THE PLANE BELIVED
TO HAVE CRASHED INTO SEA JUNE 2 CAME FROM,NOR WHO WAS ABOARD.
CONOFF ASKED POLICE S ASSISTANCE IN VERIFYING STORY OF ANDREW
JACKSON BODNAR S DISAPPEARANCE,AND HIS HAVING BEEN PILOT OF
AEROCOMANDER BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN SAME ONE WHICH REPORTEDLY
CRASHED NEAR CARTAGENA JUNE 2. MARTINEZ SAID HE WOULD INFORM
CONOFF OF ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.

2. ON JUNE 19, CONOFF VISITED COLOMBIAN NAVY BASE AT CARTAGENA
AND SPOKE AT LENGTH WITH BASE COMMANDER CAPT. NOEL ARDILA. ARDILA
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SAID SCUBA DIVERS AND BOATS EQUIPPED WITH SPECIAL SONAR EQUIMENT
HAVE SEARCHED FOR TWO WEEKS IN AREA WHERE CRASH ALLEGEDLY
OCCURRED. THE AREA IS ABOUT 300 METERS FROM SHORE,-AND THE
PLANE WOULD BE IN WATER ABOUT 50 METERS DEEP. HE SAID IT SHOULD
NOT HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO LOCATE AN AIRPLANE IN SUCH AN AREA
IF A CRASH HAD OCCURRED. BECAUSE WRECKAGE HAS NOT BEEN LOCATED,
ARDILA SAID,AUTHORITIES SUSPECT FISHERMEN MAY HAVE REPORTED CRASH

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BECAUSE SOMEONE PAID THEM TO DO SO. ARDILA SAID FISHERMEN S
STORIES CONFLICT AND THEIR REACTION WHEN ASKED IF THEY D BEEN
PAID TO REPORT THE CRASH LEAD HIM TO BELIEVE CRASH DID NOT OCCUR
AS ORIGINALLY REPORTED.

3. AS OF TUESDAY MORNING,JUNE 20,WHEN CONOFF DEPARTED CARTAGENA,
LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANDREW JACKSON BODNAR,
NOR OF HIS PLANE ,OTHER THAN THAT SUPPLIED TO THEM BY CONOFF
WHEN ASKING FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE. BOTH LT. MARTINEZ AND CAPT.
ARDILA PROMISED TO KEEP POST AWARE OF ANY DEVELOPMENTS IN CASE.

4. GEORGE BODNAR TELEPHONED CONOFF AFTERNOON JUNE 20 FROM
U.S. AND REPORTED THAT THE PERSON WHO HAS CALLED HIM ABOUT HIS
SON S ALLEGED DEATH IS NOW CLAIMING THE PLANE CRASH OCCURRED
IN A LAKE,NOT INTO THE SEA,AND THAT THREE BODIES WERE RECOVERED
BY COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES. CONOFF EXPLAINED SHE HAD JUST COME
FROM SPEAKING PERSONALLY WITH POLICE AND NAVAL OFFICIALS IN CAR-
TAGENA,AND THAT NONE OF STORIES PRINTED IN NEWSPAPERS ARE CORRECT.
IT APPEARS WHOEVER IS GIVING INFORMATION TO MR. BODNAR IS SIMPLY
RELAYING TO HIM INFORMATION SUPPLIED IN LOCAL NEWSPAPERS
WHICH,ACCORDING TO GOC OFFICIALS, IS FALSE.

5. DEA REP WHO PREVIOUSLY SPOKE TO CONOFF REGARDING CASE (PARA
5, REFTEL A),INFORMED CONOFF HE WOULD BE TRAVELLING TO CARTAGENA
JUNE 20 AND WOULD SPEAK WITH DAS CHIEF WHO (APPARENTLY
ERRONEOUSLY) REPORTED THAT NATIONAL POLICE HAD ARRESTED THREE
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PEOPLE INVOLVED IN CASE. HE SAID HE WOULD ADVISE CONOFF OF ANY
INFORMATION DEVELOPED DURING HIS VISIT TO CARATAGENA.

6. POST WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT INFORMED OF ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.
PETERSON

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